

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-55 were pending. Claims 1, 12, 16, 28, 31-35, 37, and 48 have been amended. Claims 43-47 have been canceled. Claims 56-60 have been added. Claims 1-42 and 48-60 are pending.

The Examiner's courtesy in conducting a personal interview with applicant's representative is acknowledged with appreciation. During the interview, the prior art and the pending claims were discussed. No agreement was reached.

Applicant notes that the outstanding Office Action contains no prior art rejection of claim 53, which depends from claim 31, and 54 and 55, which depends from claim 37. Independent claims 31 and 37 are discussed below.

1. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) based on Mine et al.:

Claims 1-3, 7-9, 11, 12, 19, 31, 32, 43, 47-49, 51, and 52 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Japanese patent document JP 09-054828 in the name of Mine et al. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Claim 1 recites an image processing apparatus comprising, *inter alia*, "means for setting a line segment length L, the line segment formation means being arranged and configured to form line segments having said length L." Mine et al. discloses an image processing system which utilizes vectors to describe direction. Mine et al. does not teach or suggest an image processing apparatus with means for providing a line segment length L in a line segment formation means arranged and configured to produce a line segment with the length L. Claim 1, and its dependent claims 2-27, 43, 47, 49, and 50, should be patentable over the cited prior art.

Claim 31 recites an image processing method comprising, *inter alia*, the step of "providing a predetermined line segment length." Mine et al. does not teach or suggest forming line segments. Thus, Mine et al. does not teach or suggest an image processing method that includes a step of providing a predetermined line segment length. Further,

Claim 31 recites a step of producing line segment image data representing a line segment having said predetermined line segment length. Claim 31, and its dependent claims 51-53, should be patentable over the cited reference to Mine et al.

Claim 32 recites a medium storing a program controlling a computer so as to, *inter alia*, provide a predetermined line segment length, and produce line segment image data representing a line segment having the predetermined line segment length. Mine et al. does not teach or suggest a medium storing a program that provides a predetermined line segment length and producing a line segment having the predetermined line segment length. Claim 32 should be patentable over the cited reference to Mine et al.

2. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) based on Mine et al.:

Claims 20-22, 28-30, 33, 34, and 44 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mine et al. (JP 09-054828). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Claims 20-22 depend from claim 1, which is patentable over Mine et al. Claims 20-22 are patentable over Mine et al. for at least the same reasons.

Claim 28 recites an image processing apparatus that comprises, *inter alia*, an image processing means including means for predetermining a line segment length L, the image processing means being arranged and configured to form each line segment having said predetermined length L. Mine et al. does not teach or suggest means for predetermining a line segment, and means to form each line segment having the predetermined line segment length. Claim 28, and its dependent claims 29, 30, and 44 are patentable over the cited reference to Mine et al.

Claims 33 and 34 recite a method and a computer program, respectively, that include providing a predetermined line segment length, and producing line segment image data representing a line segment...each line segment having the predetermined line

segment length. Mine et al. does not teach or suggest line segments, and so does not anticipate or render obvious the invention of claims 33 and 34.

3. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) based on Mine et al. and Huang et al.:

Claims 16, 23, 26, 27, 35-41, 45, and 46 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mine et al. (JP 09-054828) in view of U.S. Pat. No. 5,903,660 to Huang et al. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Claims 16, 23, 26, and 27 depend from claim 1, which should be patentable over Mine et al. Huang et al. has not been cited against claim 1, and in any event does not cure the deficiencies of Mine et al.

Claim 35 recites an image processing apparatus comprising, *inter alia*, “means for providing a predetermined line segment length.” Mine et al. does not disclose an image processing apparatus that produces line segments, and accordingly does not include “means for providing a predetermined line segment length.”

Claim 37 recites an inspection apparatus comprising, *inter alia*, “means for specifying a line segment length.” Mine et al. discloses an image processing apparatus that does not produce line segments, and accordingly does not include “means for specifying a line segment length.”

4. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) based on Mine et al. and Lin et al.:

Claims 4, 5, and 10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mine et al. (JP 09-054828) in view of U.S. Pat. No. 6,292,582 to Lin et al. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Claims 4, 5, and 10 depend from claim 1, and should be patentable for at least the same reasons. Lin et al. has not been cited against claim 1, and in any event does not cure the deficiencies of Mine et al.

5. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) based on Mine et al. and Tachibana:

Claims 13-15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mine et al. (JP 09-054828) in view of U.S. Pat. No. 5,898,440 to Tachibana.

Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Claims 13-15 depend from claim 1, and should be patentable for at least the same reasons. Tachibana has not been cited against claim 1, and in any event does not cure the deficiencies of Mine et al.

6. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) based on Mine et al. and King et al.:

Claims 17, 18, 24, and 25 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mine et al. (JP 09-054828) in view of U.S. Pat. No. 5,926,557 to King et al. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Claims 17, 18, 24, and 25 depend from claim 1, and should be patentable for at least the same reasons. King et al. has not been cited against claim 1, and in any event does not cure the deficiencies of Mine et al.

7. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) based on Mine et al. and Williams et al.:

Claim 6 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mine et al. (JP 09-054828) in view of U.S. Pat. No. 6,427,030 to Williams et al.

Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Claim 6 depends from claim 1, and should be patentable for at least the same reasons. Williams et al. has not been cited against claim 1, and in any event does not cure the deficiencies of Mine et al.

8. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) based on Mine et al., Huang et al., and Tachibana:

Claim 42 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mine et al. (JP 09-054828) in view of Huang et al., further in view of Tachibana.

Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Claim 42 depends from claim 37, which should be patentable over Mine et al. in view of Huang et al.

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue.

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Respectfully submitted,

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